

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. An automotive information system, comprising:
a main unit having means for detecting a start signal,
and means for turning on a power supply to said main unit in
response to said start signal; and

at least one device connected to said main unit and
having means for detecting that a predetermined condition
has been satisfied, and means for sending said start signal
to said main unit.

2. An automotive information system according to Claim
1, wherein said main unit includes means operative when said
power supply is turned on in response to said start signal,
for inquiring said device whether said device has sent the
start signal, and wherein said device has means for
answering the inquiry.

3. An automotive information system according to Claim
1 or 2, wherein said main unit and said device are connected
by system cable means comprising:

a first power line that enables electrical power to be
supplied from said main unit to said device when the power
supply to said main unit has been turned on;

a data line for enabling exchange of data between said

main part and said device;

a second power line for enabling backup power to said device at least when the power supply to said main unit has not been turned on; and

a signal line for transmitting said start signal from said device to said main unit.

4. An automotive information system comprising a main unit, and a security control unit and a wireless telephone unit that are connected to said main unit,

wherein said security control unit includes:

a sensor for sensing an extraordinary event; and means for sending a start signal to said main unit;

wherein said main unit includes:

means for detecting said start signal; means operative to turn on power supply to said main unit in response to said start signal; and means for sending, when said power supply is turned on in response to said start signal received from said security control unit, a notification request signal to said wireless telephone unit to request said wireless telephone unit to send a notification of occurrence of the extraordinary event; and

wherein said wireless telephone unit includes:

means for detecting said notification request signal; and

means for activating the telephone function of said wireless telephone unit in response to said notification request signal to notify a user of the occurrence of the extraordinary event.

5. An automotive system comprising a main unit, a wireless telephone unit connected to said main unit, a speaker, and a microphone;

wherein said wireless telephone unit includes:

means for detecting receipt of a telephone call; and

means for sending a start signal to said main unit upon detection of the receipt of the telephone call;

wherein said main unit includes:

means for detecting said start signal;

means for turning on power supply to said main unit in response to said start signal;

means for informing a user of the receipt of the telephone call when said power supply to said main unit is turned on in response to said start signal received from said wireless telephone unit;

means for detecting a responding operation of the user for responding to the telephone call; and

means for sending, when said responding operation is detected, connecting instruction to said wireless telephone unit to request said wireless telephone unit to connect the

telephone call to said main unit;

wherein said wireless telephone unit further includes:
means for detecting said connecting instruction; and
means responsive to said connecting instruction, for
connecting the telephone call to said main unit; and

wherein said main unit further includes means for
enabling the user to communicate with the telephone caller
by means of said speaker and said microphone.

6. A method of controlling an automotive information
system having a main unit and at least one device connected
to said main unit, said method comprising the steps of:
enabling said device to detect that a predetermined
condition has been satisfied;

causing said device to send a start signal to said main
unit when the satisfaction of said predetermined condition
is detected;

causing said main unit to detect said start signal; and
enabling said main unit to turn on power supply to said
main unit in response to said start signal.

7. A method according to Claim 6, further comprising
the steps of:

causing, when the power supply is turned on in response
to said start signal, said main unit to send an inquiry to

said device to inquire whether said device has sent the start signal; and

enabling said device to answer the inquiry.

8. A method of controlling an automotive information system having a main unit, and a security control unit and a wireless telephone unit that are connected to said main unit, said method comprising the steps of:

enabling said security control unit to sense an extraordinary event;

causing, when the extraordinary event is sensed, said security control system to send a start signal to said main unit;

enabling said main unit to detect said start signal;

enabling said main unit to turn on power supply to said main unit in response to said start signal;

causing, when said power supply is turned on in response to said start signal received from said security control unit, said main unit to send a notification request signal to said wireless telephone unit to request said wireless telephone unit to send a notification of occurrence of the extraordinary event;

causing said wireless telephone unit to detect said notification request signal; and

activating a telephone function of said wireless

telephone unit in response to said notification request signal to notify a user of the occurrence of the extraordinary event.

9. A method of controlling an automotive system having a main unit, a wireless telephone unit connected to said main unit, a speaker, and a microphone, said method comprising the steps of:

enabling said wireless telephone unit to detect receipt of a telephone call;

causing said wireless telephone unit to send a start signal to said main unit upon detection of the receipt of the telephone call;

enabling said main unit to detect said start signal;

enabling said main unit to turn on power supply to said main unit in response to said start signal;

enabling said main unit to inform a user of the receipt of the telephone call when said power supply to said main unit is turned on in response to said start signal received from said wireless telephone unit;

enabling said main unit to detect a responding operation of the user for responding to the telephone call;

causing said main unit to send connecting instruction to said wireless telephone unit to request said wireless telephone unit to connect the telephone call to said main

unit;

causing said wireless telephone unit to detect said connecting instruction; and

causing said wireless telephone unit to connect the telephone call to said main unit in response to said connecting instruction; and

causing said main unit to enable the user to communicate with the telephone caller by means of said speaker and said microphone.

10. An information processing apparatus, comprising a main unit and at least one device connected to said main unit, wherein said device includes:

means for detecting that a predetermined condition has been satisfied; and means for sending a start signal to said main unit upon detection of satisfaction of the predetermined condition; and

wherein said main unit includes:

means for detecting said start signal;

means for turning on power supply to said main unit in response to said start signal; and

means for inquiring, when the power supply is turned on in response to said start signal, said device whether said device has sent said start signal; and

wherein said device includes means for answering the

inquiry.

11. An automotive information system cable for connecting main unit of an automotive information system and a device included in said automotive information system, comprising:

a first power line that enables electrical power to be supplied from said main unit to said device when the power supply to said main unit has been turned on;

a data line for enabling exchange of data between said main part and said device;

a second power line for enabling backup power to said device at least when the power supply to said main unit has not been turned on; and

a signal line for transmitting a start signal from said device to said main unit.

12. An electronic device to be connected to a control unit of an automotive information system, comprising:

means for detecting that a predetermined condition has been satisfied;

means for sending a start signal to said control unit upon detection of satisfaction of said predetermined condition; and

means for answering an inquiry given by said control

unit as to whether said electronic device has sent said start signal.

13. An automotive information system control unit implementing an automotive information system in cooperation with at least one electronic device connected thereto, said automotive information system control unit comprising:

means for detecting a start signal sent from said electronic device;

means for turning on power supply to said main unit upon detection of the start signal; and

means for inquiring, when the power supply is turned on in response to said start signal, said electronic device whether said electronic device has sent said start signal.

14. A disk playback apparatus comprising:

means for reading audio data and digital data from recording mediums, and

a decoder for converting both the read audio data and digital data into output data in the same protocol format.

15. A disk playback apparatus according to Claim 14, wherein said audio data is read from a musical CD, and said digital data is read from a CD-ROM.

16. A disk playback apparatus according to Claim 14 or 15, wherein said decoder converts both said audio data and said digital data into output data in the ATAPI format.

17. A disk playback apparatus according to any one of Claims 14 to 16, further comprising a controller for outputting both the output data converted from said audio data and the output data converted from said digital data in the same interface format.

18. A disk playback apparatus according to any one of Claims 14 to 17, further comprising a controller for outputting both the output data converted from said audio data and the output data converted from said digital data through the same daisy chain line.

19. A disk playback apparatus according to Claim 18, wherein said daisy chain line comprises a universal serial bus.

20. A disk playback apparatus according to any one of Claims 17 to 19, wherein said controller sends the output data converted from said audio data by isochronous transfer.

21. A disk playback apparatus according to any one of

Claims 17 to 20, wherein said controller sends the output data converted from said digital data by bulk transfer.

22. A disk playback apparatus according to any one of Claims 17 to 21, further comprising control means for transferring the output data converted by said decoder to said controller.

23. A disk playback apparatus according to Claim 22, wherein said control means controls direct memory access.

24. A disk playback apparatus according to Claim 22 or 23, wherein said control means converts the number of bits that is a unit of the output data transferred from said decoder to said controller.

25. A disk playback apparatus according to any one of Claims 17 to 24, further comprising a ROM storing a program to control said controller, and

an address latch for accessing said ROM from said controller.

26. An automotive information system including the disk playback apparatus according to any one of Claims 14 to 25.

27. A disk playback method comprising the steps of:
reading audio data and digital data from recording
mediums, and

converting both the read audio data and digital data
into output data in the same protocol format.

28. A disk playback method according to Claim 27,
wherein said converting step converts both said audio data
and said digital data into output data in the ATAPI format.

29. A disk playback method according to Claim 27 or 28,
further comprising a step of outputting both the output data
converted from said audio data and the output data converted
from said digital data in the same interface format.

30. A disk playback method according to Claim 29,
further comprising a step of transferring the output data
converted by said converting step to said outputting step
with at least one of direct memory access and parallel bit-
number conversion.